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ABSTRACT

This historical review considers the rise of the German Democratic Republic's (GDR) system of libraries since its inception in 1945. Sections detail the following: (1) background; (2) tasks of the state organs in the development of the library network, with attention to legislation, planning, and management of the system; (3) role of the GDR Library Association; (4) structure of the library system, and the types and networks of libraries; (5) socialist cooperation and coordination within the library system; and (6) information and documentation services. Final remarks cover the compliance of the GDR library network with the goals of the National Information System of UNESCO (NATIS) and those stated in the "Charter of the Book." (FM)

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The Development of the National Library System on the Basis of the German Democratic Republic's Social Development

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The Development of the National Library System on the Basis of the German Democratic Republic's Social Development

1. Introduction

The German Democratic Republic's system of libraries was set up in 1945. After the defeat of Hitlerite fascism and beginning with the establishment of the antifascist-democratic order, it was not only imperative to repair great economic damage, but also to overcome the spiritual heritage, such as nationalism, militarism, racism and anticommunism, of fascism, imperialism and war in the minds of the people. A priority concern was to do away with the political institutions of the past, in the first place, the bourgeois-reactionary state apparatus.

The replacement of the old power machinery with no organs that are closely linked with the working class is - this is an experience made by all socialist countries alike - the prerequisite for the formation and activity of progressive, anti-imperialist and socialist establishments in all spheres of science, education and culture and thus, of libraries. It is possible to speak of the birth of the GDR's system of libraries in 1945 as much as of library work - both in its content and in its organization - a new start hade to be made. True, in bourgeois Germany there had been some important libraries of the Länder, universities or large factories both in the capital and in other big cities, but many of these establishments were damaged in the war. On the other hand, the setting up of libraries was

a matter of discretion, there was no planning or management whatever. This being so, the majority of towns, villages and enterprises did not have libraries of their own. In addition, the book stocks of the remaining libraries were replete with fascist, militaristic and anticommunist literature, and many, particularly leading, libraries had been aherants of Nazism. Therefore, one of the first measures taken by the new state organs - besides repair work at the buildings - was to replace reactionary elements among the library staff with antifascist citizens and to ensure that fascist literature was removed from the libraries.

It was certainly a political feat that librarians, supported by laymen versed in literature from other professions, succeeded at a time of tremendous economic difficulties to look through the stocks, book by book, and to remove fascis and nationalistic literature. This also made it possible to set up new stocks of humanistic, democratic and socialist literature, old and new. In those day the librarians were greatly supported by cultural officers or local commanders of the Soviet Army in removing war damage, returning stocks that had been evacuated, and also were given theoretical advice. This aid provided made it possible for the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig to open their doors again as early as 1946.

2. Tasks of the state organs in the development of the system of libraries

Legislation, planning and management of the GDR's library system

Since those days, since the constitution of the first few progressive administrative bodies, and even more so, since 1949, when the GDR was founded, our experience has been - a fundamental one for the development of the system of libraries - the following, confirmed in the working document of the NATIS Conference held in Paris in 1974 :

"The planning of the maximal accessability and utilization of a country's resources of information must be integrated into overall development. Therefore, the planning of library, documentary and archive service is a specific aspect of educational, scientific and cultural planning within the social and economic planning of a country or a region, since such planning can display its greatest possible efficiency - in this context only." +/

The socialist system in the German Democratic Republic was and still is the basis for such action in our country at all levels, in the past and in the future alike. However, for a socialist state the message conveyed by the NATIS material is to be complemented with a fundamental aspect:

+/ NATIS document 1.1.: Integration of national system of information into national development plans /retranslated from the German - the translator/

The development of society, its planning and management, proceeds under the leadership of the working class party, whose programme is the fundamental and long-term document to guide all state and social organs and institutions. The decisions adopted at the party congresses and sessions of the Party's Central Committee as well as at the delegates' conferences and party assemblies and by the elected organs in the territories, enterprises and establishments, in conjunction with the work done by the party organizations, spell out the road to socialist development and ensure its consistent realization under the leadership of the state organs and state managers at all levels and in all spheres, including library work. Thus, on the basis of lines of reference provided by the central party organs, the first development plans /1948 and 1949/1950 / and the first Five-Year Plan already included provisions on the re-establishment of libraries, but also on the systematic reorientation of the system of libraries. The 1949 "Two-Year Plan on the Development of the National Economy", for example, envisaged setting up a library of 150 to 300 volumes in each village /10,000 villages at that time/. This task was fulfilled by 1952/1953, with supply and payment done centrally /on the orders of the Ministry of Education/. The first Five-Year Plan included provisions on the development of libraries at colleges, technical schools and comprehensive schools and on the setting up of libraries for children. True to the character of the socialist state, at the same time public libraries were being set up in the nationally-owned

factories. In 1954 these libraries were handed over to the trade unions as cultural and educational establishments under the responsibility of the enterprise union executive committee concerned.

In the following years, on account of this increasingly differentiated overall social development, both the tasks of the ministries - the specialized organs of the Council of Ministers - and of the local bodies of the state and the managers of factories and institutions were extended and raised to a higher level. Ministries increasingly assumed the task of making decisions on fundamental questions for certain library sections - the Ministry of Culture for the Public Libraries, the Secretariat of State and the new Ministry of Higher Education for the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, the Deutsche Bücherei, the then Regional Libraries as well as the University and College Libraries, the Ministry of Education for the Teachers' and School Libraries, and the Minister of National Defence for the Specialized and Troops' Libraries of the National Armed Forces. The Executive Committee of the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions makes decisions for the Trade Union Libraries in factories and institutions. These "fundamental questions" of library development included, and still include, the definition of the function and operation of certain types of libraries, questions of their use, provision with literature, training and further training and remuneration of the library staff, frames of reference for construction and equipment, of unitary classification and storage of co-operation with other libraries and establishments, e.g. as regards lending. In the framework of

this decision-making process, back in the 1950's, the Ministry of Culture, together with the Ministry of Finance, and the State Planning Commission decided upon the following:

- the use of all Public Libraries owned by the State be free of charge.
- the Public Libraries owned by the State be run on a full-time basis from 5.000 inhabitants onward,
- the Public Libraries owned by the State be run on a part-time basis when there are less than 5.000 inhabitants /library heads are remunerated according to the number of books lent/,
- to establish in all district towns and major towns libraries for children which are run on a full-time basis.

The Ministry of Culture also set up a library department at the "Leipziger Kommissions- und Grossbuchhandel" in Leipzig. This department provides the Public Libraries and the Trade Union Libraries with books ready for lending, on the basis of orders placed by the libraries with reference to a weekly "Informationsdienst für den Bestandsaufbau der Staatlichen Allgemeinbibliotheken und Gewerkschaftsbibliotheken" created for this very purpose.

The other ministries too adopt important decisions /Instruction for use and scale of fees for scientific libraries at universities and colleges, setting up of a Methodological Centre for scientific libraries and information centres

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of the Ministry of Higher Education and a centre for old scientific books at the German State Library and the like/. Several tasks were laid down in common, such as the provision of major libraries with copies of books produced in the German Democratic Republic or the common education and training of librarians for Public and Trade Union Libraries at the "Erich Weiner" College in Leipzig. Another important achievement was the introduction of studies in library science and the setting up of the Institute of Library Science and Scientific Information at the Humboldt University in Berlin. By introducing these studies at university level the GDR's government implemented "ahead of time" a UNESCO recommendation issued much later, to place the training of librarians at university level on the same footing as that in the other "traditional" branches of the universities and colleges.

The regulations of the ministries comprise two "categories" : For one thing, provisions which have to be observed strictly everywhere and by every library and by any subordinate state organ, such as the use of libraries free of charge, the remuneration of the personnel, the availability of deposit copies and the organization of lending services and the exchange of publications. For another, general provisions which have to be executed by the local councils, the factory, university and college directors and in the framework of personal, material and financial resources like staff size or size of inventory, construction measures, etc.

- The rich store of experience gathered by the libraries in implementing the unity of central planning and management and local initiatives was taken account of when in 1968 the Council of Ministers adopted the Library Act.
- One minister, the Minister of Culture, was made accountable to the Council of Ministers for co-ordinating and running the whole system of libraries and authorized to adopt implementation regulations regarding the Library Act,
- the tasks of the ministries were fixed for managing library work in the sphere of competence,
- those people in charge of library planning, such as local councils, enterprises, universities and colleges, etc., and heads of libraries were granted major rights and duties concerning library work in the framework of the overall state planning and management,
- Emphasis was laid on the Library Association of the GDR /founded in 1964/ as social partner of the state organs.

The library Act lays down the basic functions of all libraries and of the seperate types of libraries, underlines the significance of co-operation and co-ordination among libraries including the creation of territorial and specialized networks, of co-operation with information and documentation services and with establishments of other social sectors and regulates the responsibilities of organs and managers at all levels. The ten implementing regulations adopted by the

Minister of Culture concerning the Library Act specify the tasks of individual establishments, types of libraries or spheres of activity which are of fundamental importance to the whole system of libraries or at least for important sectors. These implementing regulations concern:

- tasks and functioning of the Zentralinstitut für Bilbiotheks-wesen /Central Institute for Library Service/ as an institution of the Ministry of Culture for co-ordination scientific-methodological work in libraries, as centre for information and documentation services for the system of libraries and as centre of guidance of activities by the Public Libraries,
- tasks and functioning of the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig concerning the management and co-ordination of lending services and the development of central catalogues and of bibliographic work /including bibliographic work by the publishing houses and the book trade/,
- tasks and functioning of the Central Special Libraries, of the Central Research Libraries in the districts and of the Public Libraries owned by the State,
- participation of GDR's libraries and information centres in the International Exchange of Publications and in International Lending Services,
- professional denomination in the system of libraries and the award of state titles to the librarians.

Moreover, the Ministry of Culture and the Executive Committee of the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions concluded an agreement on co-operation in the sphere of literature propaganda and dissemination and in the development of the system of libraries. Another agreement - with the Ministry of Education - regulates the provision with literature of school children attending the General Polytechnical School /10 grades/ and the Extended School /12 grades/ according to the principle that in the schools there are book-stocks, including compulsory school literature, while the Public Libraries which, if possible, set up branch offices or lending services for children in schools, provide library literature. The Ministry of Culture, jointly with the Ministry of Higher Education, issued rules on the organization of lending services and co-ordinating library research.

3. The role of the Library Association of the German Democratic Republic

All these legal regulations do not only concern basic questions of library work, but are also distinguishable for the fact that drafts are discussed in public. For this purpose and to win a large number of librarians and to make the German Democratic Republic to develop library work, the Library Act provides for:

- setting up a Council for Libraries at the Ministry of Culture,

- integrating generally the Library Association in the preparation of important governmental decisions.

The Council for Libraries is composed of representatives of important ministries, the Executive Committee of the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions, of local councils and library experts. The President and the Vize-President of the Library Association are members of the Councils. So are the directors of head offices of librarianship. The Council advises the Minister of Culture in the preparation of decisions concerning libraries /particularly legal decisions/, deals with important questions of library work and development and accepts reports by ministries and local state organs on the implementation of the Library Act in their sphere of competence. It is entitled to publish material - to name one example - on what happened with regard to library work among the working class people, among young people and children, or with regard to the cultivation, continuation, dissemination of the cultural heritage by the librarians. The chairman of the Council is the Minister of Culture, his representative is the Deputy Minister and director of the Department for Publishing Houses and Book Trade in the Ministry of Culture.

While in the Council for Libraries at the Ministry of Culture work experts for libraries, information and documentation and of the state and social organs, the library board of the Public Research Libraries and Special Libraries are com-

posed of readers in different professional and age groups, industrial and agricultural experts and representatives of social organizations who are involved in the planning and management of the library concerned. They discuss important plan projects of the library, advance proposals, make suggestions for the stock building or help prepare and organize literary events or win new readers. Another form of this "social library work" is the management of small libraries onan honorary basis, in villages or of lending services in factories and residential areas.

Being a social organizer, the GDR's Library Association represents the interests of libraries by submitting through its managing bodies - at the national level and in the districts - proposals and recommendations to the state executive committee on the development of the library and commenting on plan projects, individual parts of the plan or legal provisions. The Library Act explicitly lays down that "fundamental questions of library work have to be debated by the managers of the state organs with the Library Association. For this purpose, representatives of ministries and of the Executive Committee of the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions take part in the sessions of the Presidium and its Bureau, and representatives of the local state organs and of the district executive committees of the Confederation of the Free German Trade Unions in the meetings of the district groups and their

executive committees. Every year leading personnel of the Ministry of Culture and/or of Higher Education and of the Executive Committee of the Confederation of the Free German Trade Unions with the Bureau of the Presidium of the Library Association, exchange views on topical and future questions of library work. This democratic co-operation between the GDR's Library Association Union and state and/or social organs is based on the same goals of the development of the socialist system of libraries, it has stood its test and will be continued in many forms.

The discussion of "fundamental forms of library work" with the organs of the Library Association is also of importance because often problems of planning and development are at stake. All institutions of the Library Association - both the libraries themselves and the institutions providing guidance and training - are integrated in the national economy. In the framework of planning the town, the university and college, and the factory they have to assume tasks and are allocated material as well as financial funds and manpower for the extention of their capacities and the fulfilment of their tasks. In the framework of limits confirmed in the national economic plan, the heads of the libraries decide on the use of funds and manpower and on the organization and technology of work, under their own responsibility. In addition, they are accountable to their superior planning body. Their are frames of reference for the volume of funds and the size of personnel desired. The decision on the exact size, however, is taken by the superior planning body on the basis of its overall funds. The local governments and their organs,

particularly the councils, in the districts, municipal and rural districts, towns and communities belonging to a district are of multiple important for library planning, for the following reasons:

- They confirm the plans of the Public Libraries subordinate to them;

- In implementing the Library Act they lay down principles for the arrangement of all the library work in their territories /mostly this happens in the plans for the spiritual-cultural development of the representative bodies of the people/;

- They co-ordinate and guide propaganda work by the libraries in the Week of the Book /May/, during the Days of the Soviet Book /November/ and during other social high points;

- They give libraries not subordinate to them or their planning bodies recommendations for the arrangement of their work;

- They are in charge of manpower and investment planning for all factories and establishments, including those not subordinate to them;

- They are entitled to impose sanctions on libraries of all kinds or their planning bodies if those do not fulfil their legal duties, or only insufficiently.

Today, all districts and most municipal and rural districts possess plans for spiritual-cultural development until 1980, which contain regulations for literature dissemination and propaganda including library work in towns and villages,

factories and institutions. Besides political or socio-economic aspects of major importance, such as library work in working class centres or among young people and emphasis on certain territories - e.g. new towns, new residential areas or burgeoning associations of several small towns and villages - the plans often include regulations and suggestions for socialist co-operation among libraries, for co-ordination and community work. This corresponds not only to the Library Act which regards co-operation among libraries as a central question of the arrangement of the system of libraries, but also to social requirements: Today no library by itself is able to meet the steadily increasing and differentiated demand for literature and literature information: thus, regional and specific demands for literature and information can be met only in co-operation with all, or at least with most, libraries of a territory, on the basis of the co-ordination of the development and provision of their holdings /in favour of optimum effectiveness/. Allowance made for territorial differences, all kinds of libraries, independently of their status, importance or size are involved in the various forms of co-operative effort.

4. The structure of the library system of the GDR - types and networks of libraries

Like in other countries there is in the GDR a difference between General Libraries and Special Libraries. The GDR's most important libraries, the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek and the Deutsche Bücherei Leipzig, in their capacity as central libraries, fulfil a great number of tasks of national as well as international importance.

The Deutsche Staatsbibliothek collects and processes scientific literature of all countries, independently of language and form of publication. It cultivates and collects major portions of the scientific and cultural German and international heritage in literary documents. It is the central institution for lending services and central catalogues and acts as guide and co-ordinator in the international lending service and in the exchange of publications.

The Deutsche Bücherei is the overall archives of German language literature. It collects and processes German language literature from all over the world, publishes the national bibliography and acts as guide and co-ordinator for bibliography and bibliographic work.

On account of their importance, the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek and the Deutsche Bücherei are directly subordinate to the Ministry of Higher Education. The University Libraries are also within the competence of this Ministry, however, being institutions of the universities. They are subordinate to

their chancellors. Their tradition sometimes dates back many centruries. The collection, processing and provision of literature corresponds to the structure of education and research at the university concerned and to the tasks of the students' communist education. They are, at the same time, responsible for the provision of scientific literature in the territory.

Also the Academy of Sciences of the GDR, which processes and provides literature from home and abroad for dealing with the plan themes of the Academy's research institutions and for the activities of the Academy's advisory bodies, must also be counted among the General Libraries.

The Academy's Library and the University Libraries have at their disposal one main library each and a network of branch libraries in the establishments of the Academy and the universities respectively. These branch libraries are sometimes important special libraries.

Only a few years ago the General Research Libraries of the districts were set up. The aim was to meet rapidly increasing and differentiated demands for special and general and professional literature in the social sciences, in science and technology and for a large range of belles lettres. This type of library originated either from the former municipal and district libraries or from the pooling of these libraries with the former regional libraries (the old territorial division by Länder of the bourgeois German Reich was replaced in the GDR by the devision into 15 districts, including the capital Berlin, as early as 1952) . The General Research

Libraries of the districts have the function of a central scientific book-stock and a spiritual-cultural centre for the district capital and the district, and are public libraries for adults, young people and children.

The currently existing six General Research Libraries of the districts belong to the large group of Public Libraries, the most influential and most widely distributed type of general library. They exist in every town and in every village. In the towns they have a dense network of branch libraries run on a full-time basis and lending services run on a part-time or honorary basis. In most big cities and in some rural districts mobile libraries are in use /library vans/.

The density of the network of Public Libraries guarantees every citizen the right, and this is especially important in a socialist country, to read, independent of where he lives and where he spends most of his leisure time. The Public Library is the only type of library which can objectively be used by every worker. The Public Libraries fulfil special tasks in caring for children and young people as well as for co-operative farmers and other people working in agriculture, forestry and in the food processing industry. Their inventories are "general" in the literal sense of the word since they range from the picture book for children of pre-school age to scientific literature, depending on the size of the library and the socio-economic structure of the territory. Belles lettres and books for children play an important part. They are also in the limelight of propaganda activity and literary discussions. Of growing importance is the use of records,

cassettes, reproductions and other audio-visual materials in the phonoteques and arthoteques of the Public Libraries. The activities of the Trade Union Libraries, like those of the Public Libraries, focus on providing workers with literature; this is done, however, on the basis of a division of labour: the main sphere of activity of the trade union library is the factory, of the Public Library the town, the village and the residential area. For this reason the Public Libraries are establishments of the local councils, the Trade Union Libraries of the factories trade union executive committees. Since the setting up, the processing and provision of book-stock, the goals and functions of these libraries coincide in many respects, they work very closely together. The Trade Union Libraries are also supported by establishments which guide the Public Libraries - such as the Zentralinstitut für Bibliothekswesen, General Research Libraries of the districts, municipal and district libraries, municipal and sub-district libraries and rural libraries. Their guidance as cultural and educational establishments of the trade unions is in the hands of the executive councils of the Confederation of the Free German Trade Unions and of the Central Library of Trade Unions at the Confederation's Executive Committee. They are special libraries of different size and with different functions in many enterprises and institutions: universities and colleges, research institutions (including academies), hospitals, state and social management bodies, industrial, construction and transport enterprises,etc. Common to them is the task to collect, process and provide the scientific and spe-

cialized literature necessary for their sector, for science, research, training and practical work, proceeding from the specific requirements of the factories and establishments or of the special subject. They either work closely together with the information and documentation centres or are - in the majority of cases - part of an information centre. The aim is the organized co-operation of the special libraries in the most important sectors of social science, science and economy in the form of special library networks. The special library network is to be headed by a Central Special Library. At present this is the case in the fields of pedagogics, agriculture, transport, physical culture and sports, medicine (however, without a Central Special Library) and military science. Integrated in these special library networks are efficient libraries without regard to their status, such as General Research Libraries, Academy, University and College Libraries or their branch libraries, libraries of research centres or factories, etc.

The Central Special Libraries were and are formed in close co-operation with the competent central research institutions and the central guiding bodies (science and technology) and/or central bodies (social sciences) for information and documentation, by decision of a minister. They have centralized book-stock and function as a methodological and guiding centre for the special libraries of their sector whose tasks they co-ordinate in building book-stocks, in bibliographic and information activities and in other fields. As regards the building of book-stocks, the Central Special Libraries concentrate

on special literature and periodicals from other countries - besides literature for their planning bodies (e.g. Pedagogical Central Library for the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences) - on special literature and fundamental scientific literature in languages which are difficult of access. The Central Special Library as a bibliographic centre publishes not only bibliographies and information material of its own, but also co-ordinates this activity, it participates in the preparation of projects of electronic data processing. The Central Special Libraries are involved in research work in the field of library science and informationscience.

5. Socialist co-operation and co-ordination within the library system

Co-operation among the libraries in library networks increases the efficiency of their work for users, especially regarding the availability, provision and processing of literature. This co-operation in a network is part of the wide field of common work on which permanent extension and deepening, and thus improvement, great emphasis is placed in the GDR's system of libraries. In the Library Act there are hints on how to arrange co-operation in various places, particularly in section III "Increasing the efficiency of libraries". At the same time the state bodies are obliged to promote common work, and the Library Association is recommended to foster socialist co-operation in the system of libraries by stimulating and supporting actively multiple forms of

co-operation and the exchange of experience among the libraries of different sectors and types - a recommendation taken account of by the Association both in its Statute and in its long-term programme as well as in its practical work. This is particularly important since members of the Associaltion are libraries of all types and sectors of different size and significance. The Association thus has plenty of opportunities to join the different libraries in a planned venture or to discuss ideas on community projects and to submit them to the state organs. One should always keep in mind that co-operation is, on the one hand, a matter of good organization, but on the other, also - and this is often more important - a matter of making personnel from different libraries meet, who in this way come to know and appreciate the work done and the results achieved by their colleagues.

In the course of time numerous forms of co-operative work came into being, with short and long-term goals, with small-scale or large-scale plans - but all having the aim to make greater progress in common than can be achieved by the individual libraries acting in isolation, General Research Libraries and Special Libraries work work together to be able to satisfy demands for literature and information in the sphere of research and education much better. Public Libraries support University and College Libraries in providing literature for the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism and the communist education of students; university and college libraries support Public Libraries or Trade Union Libraries to provide literature

for education and further training in the territory or for development work in factories. Trade Union Libraries and Special Libraries in factories or Trade Union Libraries and Public Libraries plan and implement in common the better provision of workers, of innovators and those advancing suggestions for making work more rational, Public Libraries and agricultural special libraries the provision of co-operative farmers and workers in agriculture, forestry and the food processing industry with scientific and specialized literature, but also with new works of belles lettres and works of the cultural heritage. The forms of organization are different. They range from oral agreements to contractual agreements, from co-operation between two establishments to co-operation among several libraries and co-ordinated and graded in the territorial or Special Library Network, under the guidance and leadership of a library (Central Special Library, General Research Library of the district, Municipal Library and District Library,etc.) . Also lending services or the extension of the central catalogues can be called co-operative projects on the basis of mutuality. In the future, co-operative ventures of the libraries will increase in significance. The capacities of the libraries joined in this form of co-operation are at the disposal of each of these libraries. Under the leadership of the "Co-operative Council of Library Heads" the procurement of books is co-ordinated like the planning and implementation of bibliographies,

union lists of periodicals, literary events and exhibitions, the joint use of technical equipment, or - in minor sectors - the central processing of new acquisitions. The composition of such co-operation groups is different. In the co-operation association of Berlin libraries are the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, the Library of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR, the Berlin City Library and the University Library; in the co-operation associations at Schwedt (Frankfurt/Oder district), at Teltow (Potsdam district) and in some other towns are Public Libraries, Trade Union Libraries and Special Libraries of factories and scientific establishments. The community idea, the idea of a community of interests for the benefit of the reader has already gained broad acceptance, is gaining even more currently with the help of state organs, the Library Association and the diligent work done by librarians.

5. Information and documentation

Like the system of libraries, the information and documentation services have developed in close connection with the stages and particularities of socialist construction in the GDR. The socialist relations of property permitted and conditioned the central management and promotion of a system of information and documentation organized along unitary lines. The socialist state with legal means exercised a direct influence on the development of information and documentation in the interest of scientific-technological progress. Based on government

decisions, central information and documentation centres were set up. As early as November 16, 1950, a decision adopted by the Council of Ministers provided for the founding of the Zentralstelle für wissenschaftliche Literatur (ZWL - Centre for Scientific Literature). It was the Centre's primary task to produce foreign literature, to improve the processing and making available of literature from the USSR and the other socialist countries, to run a centre documenting all translations done in the GDR, to found and publish the "Technisches Zentralblatt", documentation services and co-ordinate and guide methodologically all the information and documentation centres concerned. In the first half of the 1950's a start was made for pooling the information establishment into one network.

On December 1, 1956, the Institute of Documentation at the GDR's Academy of Sciences was founded, continuing the work of the Centre for Scientific Literature. The Institute was responsible for co-ordinating and guiding methodologically information and documentation activities in the fields of natural sciences, technology and economics and for the distribution of the documentation services provided by the information and documentation centres. In the 1950's information and documentation started to develop into independent sectors.

At the beginning of the 1960's, the Party and Government, with science as a productive force gaining in significance, thoroughly dealt with the questions of scientific research. One of the results was the decision of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, of August 3, 1963, on the further construction

of the GDR's system of information and documentation in the spheres of science, technology and economics. This decision initiated a new step in the construction of a Science and Technology Information System (IWT) in the GDR, run on a unitary and central basis. While in the Fifties the focus of information and documentation was often on the latter, now information which is geared to the central points of science and technology came to the fore. The Institute for Documentation was dissolved. It was replaced by the Central Institute of Information and Documentation of the GDR (ZIID - Zentralinstitut für Information und Dokumentation der DDR) which is subordinate to the Ministry of Sciences and Technology and which co-ordinates and guides methodologically information and documentation activities. The structure of the IWT envisages three levels: the information centres (at factories and institutes), the guide centres (at the Association of nationally-owned factories and combines) and the central guidance establishments (at the central state management bodies for individual branches of the national economy).

Since the second half of the 1950's there has been a growing emphasis on theoretical questions of information and documentation; in the early 1960's first mention was made in the GDR of information and documentation science. In the mid-Sixties college and university education for information personnel was introduced at the Institut für Bibliotheks-wissenschaft und wissenschaftliche Information (Institute of Library Science and Scientific Information) at Humboldt-

University in Berlin and at the Institut für Information, Erfindungswesen und Recht at the Technical University of Ilmenau.

In addition to information centres in the sphere of science and technology, very early information centres for social sciences came into being. At the beginning of the 1960's their foundation and development was more or less spontaneous. Also some scientific libraries, such as the University Library in Jena, the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek and the Deutsche Bücherei created such establishments (information centres of social science). The decision of the Council of Ministers of April 22, 1965, on the further extension of the system of information and documentation in the social sciences required its planned construction according to the principle of co-ordinated centralization. Under this decision, the Zentrale Leitung für gesellschaftswissenschaftliche Information und Dokumentation (ZIGID - Central Management of Information and Documentation in the Social Sciences) at the GDR's Academy of Sciences was set up as the organ in charge of the development, guidance, co-ordination and control of information in the social sciences and documentation in the GDR on November 1, 1965.

The structure of the system of information and documentation in the social sciences, like that of IuT, consists of three levels, though the formation of the network is not based on the structure of the state management organs (the so-called production principle), but according to specialities.

To increase the efficiancy of their work, the information centres showed from the beginning an interest in international co-operation, above all with the information establishments of the USSR and the other CMEA countries. This co-operation in the framework of IWT was raised to a higher level following the foundation of the International Centre of Scientific and Technical Information in Moscow in 1969. The GDR is represented in this Centre by ZIID. The GDR's information establishments, under the guidance of ZIID, take an active part in the development of the International System of Scientific and Technical Information (ISWTI). There is a co-operation in the development and practical work of the International Branch-Oriented Information Systems, in the International Source-Oriented Information Systems (Internationale Zweigorientierte Informationssysteme (IZIS) and Internationale Quellenorientiere Informationssysteme (IQIS)).

In a way similar to that in the IWT sector, international co-operation in the framework of CMEA develops for the domain of information in the social sciences. The centre of the International System of Social Science Information is INION, with which ZLGID has close relations of co-operation.

The development of relations of co-operation with neighbouring fields of information and documentation has been of fundamental importance for achieving a high efficiency in information activity, especially with the scientific library system. The 1950's were marked by the emergence of an independent sector of information and documentation and thus by their delimitation from the system of libraries. Efforts were made

in the 1960's for conducting fruitful co-operation on the basis of division of labour among libraries and information centres. A discussion conducted on these problems at the Annual Meeting ofthe Library Association of the GDR in Erfurt in 1966 was a fundamental contribution to clarify mutual relationships. The experience gathered in the subsequent ten years in co-operation between the two sectors was resumed and generalized in 1976 during a colloquium on "State, Tasks and Prospects of Co-operation among Libraries and Establishments of Information and Documentation", again sponsored by the Library Association of the GDR. Agreement was reached that both libraries and information establishments exercise functions in the system of information and undertake information activities according to their specific tasks. Incumbent of libraries is sole responsibility for the acquisition, the processing by libraries and the provision of information sources. They undertake a comprehensive information activity on the basis of the means of information administered by them and continue to assume responsibility for a co-ordinated, planned bibliographic activity. The task of information centres is to prepare, process and provide according to the needs of new knowledge, conceptions and data for research, teaching and practice. The focus is on information on specific facts. One of the main aspects of co-operation and step-by-step integration between systems of libraries and information and documentation is the co-ordination of principle subjects for collection and preparation, the unification and approval of working methods, standards, etc. and the joint performance

of scientific advance work for the special libraries and information activities.

7. Final remarks

Reading and using books and literature of all fields has today become a vital need for millions of citizens of all ages and trades and professions in the GDR. "It is a duty of society to ensure that every one can enjoy the benefits of reading." We think that this first sentence in Article I of the "Charter of the Book " on the International Year of the Book in 1972 has been headed in the GDR - in the work doneby bookkeepers and publishers, by the state organs, the Library Association and libraries, which - states Article VII of the "Charter of the Book" - are"national means for imparting information and knowledge, the enjoyment of intelligence and beauty". And: "The aim of the extension of a national library network is to make accessible to all readers the wealth of books" - this was and still is our concern in which we agree with the "Charter of the Book" and the goals of NATIS, in the interest of information, education, training and leasure for our citizens. This is also in line with the Party Programme adopted by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany in 1976, which says: The Socialist Unity Party comes out for attaining a level of literary life ... and of work ... by the libraries which will meet the increasing demands of the developed socialist society and the international position of the German Democratic Republic".